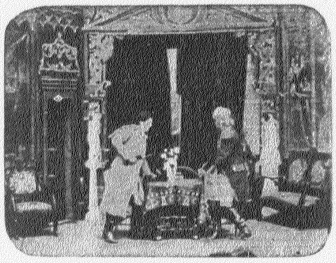
WIDE AWAKE ALL THE TIME
Selig's Record

Here's Another Winner, A Great Irish Drama

A Daughter of Erin

Released Oct. 1, 1908



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A Word to the Wise

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A Daughter of Erin

KITTY O'CONNER is the daughter of an Irish peasant, and being a buxom lass, is courted by many of the handsome lads of the village. One in particular, Miles O'Mally, is untiring in his efforts to win this charming lass, and he allows no opportunity to escape him whereby he might press his suit for Kitty's hand.

The opening scene of the picture shows the young couple gliding over the glassy surface of one of the pretty lakes of Killarney in Miles' new boat. Care free and happy in the sunshine of their young lives, they can see no dark clouds on their horizon. But youth is unheedful of all hidden dangers, and so unsuspecting of any shadow that might creep across their path, they laughingly while away the afternoon of a beautiful summer day.

Charles Hardacre, a young Irish gentleman (Patrick O'Conner's landlord), while riding along the shores of the lake, is attracted by the beauty of the little Irish girl in the boat, and springing from his horse, returns her salutation with all the grace of a polished courtier. The memory of Kitty's pretty face lingers in his mind long after the young couple have passed out of sight, and obeying a mad impulse that arises in his breast, he determines to call upon the father of the little charmer and cultivate, if possible, a closer friendship than a mere speaking acquaintance.

The next day, accompanied by his mother, a haughty woman and a true daughter of the nobility, he draws rein at the O'Conner threshold and, much to the astonishment of these worthy but humble people, he enters their house and partakes of their hospitality. While there he allows himself to fall more deeply than ever in love with the fascinating little witch, and, watching his opportunity, hastily tells her of his admiration. Then, drawing a ring from his finger, slips it on one of hers. The dazed but delighted girl can only stammer out her thanks before her lover has gone. But the father, a wise and careful guardian of his only child, overhears Hardacre's protestations and, after he has taken his leave, upbraids pretty Kitty for her fickleness and apparent disloyalty to Miles O'Mally, the Irish lad who has always called her sweetheart. Incensed by the seeming perfidy of young Hardacre in trifling, as he thinks, with his daughter's affections, the old man hastens away to inform Miles of the danger of losing his sweetheart. Poor Miles is heartbroken at the news, and his one thought is to save Kitty from the fate of most girls who aspire to rise above their station in life and wed a nobleman. With the frenzy of despair the excited lad runs to the house of Charles Hardacre and demands to know why he wishes to rob him of his promised wife. With an insult on his lips, young Hardacre turns to leave his questioner, when the good right arm of our hero straightens out and the master of Kenmore lies prostrate on the ground. Rushing away, Miles soon returns to the anxious father, and together they hasten to the little home where Kitty, struggling between the desire for an ambition and the duty she owes her father, is waiting. Here Miles questions her, but reading the truth in her downcast eyes and her silence, bids her farewell.

We now have a lapse of two years. Kitty is a lady, but what a change has come over the light hearted Irish girl. Saddened by the neglect of her husband, scorned for her low birth by her cruel mother-in-law, we find her beating out her young life against the bars that seem to hold her as in a prison cell. Broken hearted, disappointed, she is but a bird in a gilded cage.

One day while gazing out of the window, wistfully watching the birds in their freedom, she is startled by the apparition of her former sweetheart who, with reckless disregard for propriety, has determined to see his lost love at all hazards and find out if the reports of her unhappiness are true. Before she realizes what she has done, Kitty has called the lad into her drawing room and has begun to question him, when they are alarmed by the approach of the husband and his friend, a dissolute young English officer of the army. Concealing Miles behind the curtains, she meets Hardacre and his companion with a calmness born of months of suffering. To his brutal command to leave the room, she returns but a look of scorn and growing hatred, and with a toss of her pretty head, she sweeps out of their presence. Then with horror stamped upon his face Miles, who still remains concealed behind the draperies, hears a fiendish plot of Hardacre to rid himself of his young wife. Another marriage of vast importance is his excuse, so trembling in fear and rage, young Miles hears every detail of the ghastly business.

Leaving his place of hiding, he dashes away to acquaint the unhappy father of the proposed murder of his child. We are next taken to the house of a brutal scoundrel where Hardacre completes the final arrangements for making away with the object of his hatred. Everything is arranged in accordance with his wishes, and the paid assassin and his two confederates are soon on their way to carry out the grewsome contract. Forcing their way through a window, they come upon the helpless woman, and before a scream can leave her trembling lips, it is smothered in the folds of a heavy cloak that is thrown over her head. The butler, aroused by the unusual noise, hastens to her assistance, but is set upon and beaten to insensibility by the murderous rogues. Carrying the now almost lifeless body of their victim to the banks of a deep river, where the fiendish husband awaits to make sure of her certain death, the three scoundrels are about to cast her into the dark waters when, like a thunderbolt from out a clear sky, a boat shoots out of the darkness and three forms spring lightly upon the shelving bank. 'Tis Miles, with Kitty's father and a stout Irish lad, who have arrived in the nick of time. Now ensues as pretty a six-handed Irish fight as one could wish to see. Now one, now another is on top, till finally with a trick of his own, Miles tosses the burly leader of the murderous gang over his head, and sends him floundering into the murky waters below. Discouraged by the loss of their captain, the other two thugs are soon defeated and tossed in the river after their leader.

Through the darkness, Hardacre mistakes the noise of battle for the struggle in disposing of his wretched wife, and groping his way toward the spot where he supposed his hired assassins were awaiting him, he runs into the arms of the heroic Miles. Springing back with a cry of fear and surprise, he draws a keen edged knife from his bosom and rushes upon his hated enemy. But he reckons not of the strong limbed and agile Irish lad, who, forcing him to his knees, compels him to seriously wound himself with his own weapon, leaving him to be cared for by his brutal friend, the captain.

Our three heroes with their precious burden make their way back to the little cottage they call home, and there, after many weeks of peace and quiet, and after the law has freed her from her unworthy husband, Kitty O'Conner sends young Miles to the seventh heaven of delight by naming the day when he could call her his own Colleen.

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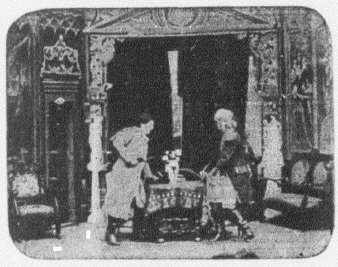

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